



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590



REPLY TO THE ATTENTION

B-19J

EI-358

September 30, 2003

David Navecky
Case Control Unit
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: Docket No. AB-295 (Sub-No. 5X), *Indiana Rail Road Company-Abandonment and Discontinuance Exemption Environmental Assessment*

Dear Mr. Navecky:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) Environmental Assessment dated September 12, 2003. Our comments in this letter are provided pursuant to NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

We appreciate the inclusion of items of concern as listed in our September 3, 2003 letter. To that end, the STB's recommendation that the Indiana Rail Road Company (IRRC) consult with the EPA prior to commencement of salvage activities overlooks the fact that the City of Bloomington will acquire the line, as is, for use as a recreational trail. Because the IRRC will not perform salvage activities under the proposed arrangement, we suggest the IRRC contact the City of Bloomington with the results of the consultation discussion. Such a discussion would allow the City to take full advantage of IRRC's expertise regarding salvage opportunities as well as fulfill the consultation condition.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this document. Please send the STB's final decision to me when it is filed. Should you have any questions, please contact me or Kathy Kowal of my office at 312/353-5206.

Sincerely,

Kenneth A. Westlake, Chief
Environmental Planning and Evaluation Branch

cc: John H. Broadley, Esq.